

Message Text

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71

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /128 W
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R 181645Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2597

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USUN NEW YORK 589

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 3368

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MO SP SS

SUBJECT: MOROCCAN-SPANISH DIALOGUE ON SAHARA

1. IN CONVERSATION JULY 17, SPANISH AMBASSADOR MARTIN-GAMERO (PLEASE PROTECT THIS SENSITIVE SOURCE) INFORMED ME HE HAD BEEN SUMMONED BY KING JULY 16. ALTHOUGH DISCUSSION OF SAHARAN ISSUE HAD BEEN TOUGH, SPANISH AMB HAD BEEN IMPRESSED WITH CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE MAINTAINED BY KING. LATTER HAD PLACED EQUAL EMPHASIS ON NEED FOR MOROCCO TO MOVE AHEAD ON SAHARAN QUESTION AND ON OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE TO SPAIN TO SAFEGUARD ITS INTERESTS THROUGH AGREEMENT WITH MOROCCO. IN REPLY TO MY COMMENT THAT KING OBVIOUSLY TAKING CONSIDERABLE RISKS, SPANISH AMB EXPRESSED VIEW THAT KING WELL AWARE OF RISKS INVOLVED.

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KING CLEARLY FELT THIS WAS RIGHT TIME TO MOVE AND APPEARED

TO SPANISH AMB TO BE ON IRREVERSIBLE COURSE. SPANISH AMB HOPED GOOD ATMOSPHERE OF HIS MEETING WITH KING WOULD HELP CALM ATTITUDES IN MADRID. HE ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN RE SPANISH GOVT'S POLICY, COMMENTING THAT MADRID HAD BEEN TOO SLOW IN MOVING CONSTRUCTIVELY, WHILE MUTUAL PROPAGANDA HAD ALSO BEEN UNHELPFUL. AT SAME TIME, GOM HAD BEEN TACTLESS IN MAKING KING'S JULY 4 LETTER TO FRANCO PUBLIC BEFORE SPAIN HAD HAD CLANCE TO REPLY. THIS TACTIC HAD STRENGTHENED HAND OF HARDLINERS IN MADRID AND MADE WORK OF SPANISH EMB HERE MORE DIFFICULT.

2. I ASKED SPANISH AMB HOW HE SAW NEXT TWO MONTHS. HE SAID THAN CRISIS BUILDING UP MORE RAPIDLY THAN HE HAD EXPECTED. GOM WAS TAKING ASTUTE COURSE TACTICALLY, HE CONCEDED, BUT THINGS WERE MOVING VERY FAST AND MIGHT GET OUT OF HAND. SPANISH AMB DID NOT THINK CLASHES OF REGULAR FORCES WOULD TAKE PLACE, IN LIGHT OF GREAT DISPARITY IN MILITARY STRENGTH BETWEEN SPAIN AND MOROCCO. HOWEVER, MOROCCAN CAUSE WOULD REQUIRE MARTYRS AND THERE WOULD NO DOUBT BE GUERRILLA ACTIVITY. SPANISH AMB DISPLAYED CONCERN THAT ANY SUCH CLASHES COULD HARDEN GOS THINKING.

3. ON ARAB SUPPORT FOR MOROCCAN POSITION, SPANISH AMB BELIEVED THERE HAD BEEN MOVEMENT TOWARD UNITED ARAB FRONT. ARAB SUMMIT REQUIRED SUCH FRONT, IN HIS VIEW, AND ARABS LIKELY THEREFORE TO BE ABLE TO PAPER OVER DIFFERENCES BEFOREHAND.

4. I ASKED SPANISH AMB ABOUT GOS HEAD OF SPANISH SAHARA OFFICE, EDUARDO BLANCO (MADRID 4540). SPANISH AMB CHARACTERIZED HIM AS BEING CONSERVATIVE AND TOUGH.

5. SPANISH AMB CONFIDED HE HAD BEEN ON VERGE OF BEING APPOINTED AS AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON, BUT, UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, COULD NOT BE SPARED HERE.

6. COMMENT: CARROT AND STICK APPROACH OF KING'S MEETING WITH SPANISH AMB IS IN HARMONY WITH KING'S FRIENDLY CONGRATULATIONS TO FRNACO (REPORTED JULY 17 PRESS) ON OCCASION OF SPANISH NATIONAL DAY. KING EXPRESSED SINCERE WISHES FOR FRANCO'S
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PERSONAL HEALTH AND HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY OF SPANISH PEOPLE, GOING ON TO HOPE THAT TRADITIONAL BILATERAL RELATIONS WOULD BE SAFEGUARDED AND REINFORCED. SIMULTANEOUSLY, MOROCCAN PRESS HAS BEEN CARRYING USUAL SCATHING ATTACKS ON SPANISH COLONIALISM.
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